

Message Text

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ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 IGA-01 NIC-01 EB-07 OMB-01 /077 W

----- 004557

R 271525Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2053

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY (BY POUCH)

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ADDIS ABABA 14148

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS PINT ECON ET

SUBJECT: LAND REFORM AND THE HARVEST

REF: ADDIS 13531

1. THERE FOLLOW EXCERPTS FROM THE EDITORIAL ENTITLED "COMMON COUNTRY" WHICH APPEARED IN THE ETHIOPIAN HERALD DATED NOVEMBER 27, 1974. WE SHALL TRY TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ON THE SCOPE AND NATURE OF THE INCIDENTS WHICH PROMPTED IT.

2. QUOTE. ETHIOPIA SHOULD BE FOR ALL ETHIOPIANS. . . . TAKE THE ISSUE OF LAND TENURE IN THIS COUNTRY, FOR INSTANCE, THE INEQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF THIS NATURAL GIFT HAS OFTEN BEEN THE MAJOR SOURCE OF CONFLICT AND MISUNDERSTANDING BETWEEN LAND-OWNERS AND TENANTS FOR QUITE A LONG TIME IN THE PAST. IN RECENT MONTHS IN PARTICULAR, "LAND TO THE TILLER" HAS BEEN GIVING RISE TO CONSIDERABLE MISUNDERSTANDING IN RURAL AREAS. THE FACT REMAINS THAT NO
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LAND REFORM PROGRAM HAS AS YET BEEN CARRIED OUT. THERE SHOULD BE

NO DOUBT, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH A REFORM WILL BE EFFECTED SOON.

UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, EXISTING LAWS SHOULD BE RESPECTED PENDING THE CARRYING OUT OF A LAND REFORM PROGRAM. RADIO ETHIOPIA IN PARTICULAR SHOULD PLAY A MORE CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN THIS RESPECT BY INITIATING A PROGRAM AIMED AT CREATING HARMONY BETWEEN PRESENT LANDLORDS AND TENANTS AND PREPARE BOTH FOR THE REFORMS THAT ARE TO BE BROUGHT ABOUT IN THE FUTURE.

PROBLEMS OF ONE SORT OR ANOTHER ARE NOT PECULIAR TO THIS OR THAT PARTICULAR REGION OF THE COUNTRY. WHAT SHOULD BE AVOIDED IS THE MAKING OF A MOUNTAIN OUT OF A MOLEHILL BY EXAGGERATING CERTAIN ISOLATED INCIDENTS. THERE IS NO POINT IN FANNING THE FLAMES OF HOSTILITY BY CREATING THE FALSE IMPRESSION THAT OWNERS OF LAND ARE BEING DISPOSSESSED OF THEIR PROPERTY BY TENANTS THROUGH ILLEGAL MEANS. THIS JUST IS NOT TRUE.

IGNORANCE IS OFTEN THE CAUSE OF CONSIDERABLE MISUNDERSTANDING. IN A COUNTRY LIKE OURS WHERE THE RURAL PEOPLE ARE MOSTLY ILLITERATE AND LIVE ISOLATED FROM ONE ANOTHER, IT IS QUITE UNDERSTANDABLE WHY MANY AN INDIVIDUAL SHOULD BE EASILY MISLED AS TO THE AIMS AND PURPOSES OF CERTAIN PROGRAMS OF ACTION WHICH ARE INTENDED TO SERVE THE GENUINE INTERESTS OF ETHIOPIANS AS A WHOLE. WHAT ONE SHOULD STRIVE TO DO IS TO CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE OF MUTUAL CONFIDENCE AND UNDERSTANDING AMONG THE VARIOUS SECTORS OF SOCIETY.

AS REGARDS RELATIONS BETWEEN PRESENT-DAY TENANTS AND LAND-OWNING INDIVIDUALS, IT IS ESSENTIAL TO WORK CLOSELY WITH LOCAL ELDERS IN ORDER TO BRING ABOUT A GREATER MEASURE OF UNDERSTANDING UNTIL THE PROBLEM IS SOLVED ONCE AND FOR ALL. . . .

MEANWHILE, WE SHOULD GIVE THOSE AT THE HELM OF THINGS TIME TO WORK OUT THEIR PLANS. . . .UNQUOTE.
WYMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, LAND REFORMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: boyleja
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ADDIS14148
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740345-0392
From: ADDIS ABABA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741110/aaaaahmc.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: ADDIS 13531
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: boyleja
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 MAY 2002 by cunninfx>; APPROVED <17 MAR 2003 by boyleja>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LAND REFORM AND THE HARVEST
TAGS: PINS, PINT, ECON, ET
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005